

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of selling commodities comprising:
 - a. identifying combinations of commodities which are generally used by industrial consumers and establishing a price for each combination, said price being lower than the sum of said market costs of said individual commodities;
 - b. establishing a Web site at which said identified combinations of commodities are offered for sale at said price, wherein no price for an individual commodity is quoted.
2. A method of buying commodities comprising:
 - a. identifying suppliers of commodities having surplus capacities; and
 - b. entering into take or pay supply agreements and/or option to purchase agreements for a plurality of commodities with one or more of said suppliers, each of said agreements specifying a cost for an individual commodity, said cost being less than market cost for said individual commodity in the absence of said take or pay supply agreement or option to purchase agreement.
3. A method of buying and selling commodities comprising:
 - a. identifying suppliers of commodities having surplus capacities;
 - b. entering into take or pay supply agreements and/or option to purchase agreements for a plurality of commodities with one or more of said suppliers, each of said supply agreements specifying a cost for an individual commodity, said cost being less than market cost for said individual commodity in the absence of said take or pay supply agreement and/or or option to purchase agreement;
 - c. identifying combinations of commodities which are generally used by industrial consumers and establishing a price for each combination, said price being the sum of the cost of the individual commodities specified in said supply agreements plus a profit factor but said price being lower than the sum of said market costs of said individual commodities;
 - d. establishing a Web site at which said identified combinations of commodities are offered for sale at said price, wherein no price for an individual commodity is quoted.
4. Method according to claim 1 or 3 wherein said price is automatically adjusted based on one or more factors selected from the group consisting of currency exchange rates, currency risk,

credit risk, country specific political risk, delivery dates, delivery locations, freight costs, Customs duties, and remaining available amount of each commodity in a particular combination under said take or pay supply agreements and/or or option to purchase agreements.

5. Method according to claim 1 or 3 wherein upon selection of an identified combination of commodities by an industrial consumer at said Web site, said industrial consumer may specify desired purchase contract terms selected from the group consisting of quantity, date, and delivery location and then may enter into an automatically generated binding purchase contract to purchase said selected identified combination of commodities under said selected terms.

6. Method according to claim 1 or 3 wherein none of said suppliers is identified at said Web site.

7. Method according to claim 1 or 3 wherein said combinations of commodities are branded only with a name or mark of an owner of said Web site.

8. Method according to claim 2 wherein a relational database is used to process data to identify said suppliers of commodities having surplus capacities and rank the surplus capacities of commodities in order of best opportunities for profitable disposal of commodities and/or largest spread between cost to purchase said surplus capacities and probable selling price of said commodities.

9. Method according to claim 2 or 3 wherein a sphere of influence for a commodity supplier is identified as a territory in which the commodity supplier normally sells at least about 80 percent of its output and the sphere of influence is included in the relational database.

10. Method according to claim 2 or 3 wherein consumer demand for each commodity in each territory and each sphere of influence is determined and included in the relational database.

11. Method according to claim 2 or 3 wherein the database includes core tables of basic information about plants, customers, and products, linking tables of information linking the core boxes with each other, and other tables.

12. Method according to claim 2 or 3 wherein the relational database is used to determine likely variable costs, marginal capacities, sphere of influence, freight, foreign exchange rates, and/or labour costs and to rank suppliers of commodities in order of likely profitability for a given commodity to be purchased and resold.

13. System for selling commodities comprising a programmed computer system adapted to deliver Web pages offering for sale to industrial consumers a combination of individual commodities at a combination price which is lower than the sum of the market prices of the individual commodities.

14. System according to claim 13 wherein said combination price is automatically calculated based on the prices specified in one or more take or pay and/or or option to purchase agreements for commodities which have been negotiated with one or more suppliers of said commodities, said agreements specifying a cost for an individual commodity which is less than market cost in the absence of said take or pay and/or or option to purchase agreement.

15. System according to claim 13 wherein said combination price which is automatically calculated is the sum of the individual costs plus a profit factor, and is further adjusted by one or more factors selected from the group consisting of quantity, date, currency exchange rates, currency risk, credit risk, country specific political risk, delivery dates, delivery locations, freight costs, Customs duties, and remaining available amount of each commodity in a particular combination under said take or pay and/or option to purchase agreements.

16. System according to claim 13 wherein said Web pages do not identify said suppliers but only identify the operator of said system or the mark of said operator.

17. System according to claim 13 comprising a relational database comprising identify said suppliers of commodities having surplus capacities and a processor adapted to rank the surplus capacities of commodities in order of best opportunities for profitable disposal of commodities and/or largest spread between cost to purchase said surplus capacities and probable selling price of said commodities.

18. System according to claim 17 wherein a sphere of influence for a commodity supplier is identified as a territory in which the commodity supplier normally sells at least about 80 percent of its output and the sphere of influence is included in the relational database.

19. System according to claim 17 wherein in the relational database comprises consumer demand for each commodity in each territory and each sphere of influence.

20. System according to claim 17 wherein the database includes core tables of basic information about plants, customers, and products, linking tables of information linking the core boxes with each other, and other tables.

21. System according to claim 17 wherein the processor is adapted to determine likely variable costs, marginal capacities, sphere of influence, freight, foreign exchange rates, and/or labour costs and to rank suppliers of commodities in order of likely profitability for a given commodity to be purchased and resold.

22. System according to claim 17 wherein the processor is adapted to automatically adjust price based on one or more factors selected from the group consisting of currency exchange rates, currency risk, credit risk, country specific political risk, delivery dates, delivery locations, freight costs, Customs duties, and remaining available amount of each commodity in a particular combination under said take or pay and/or option to purchase agreements.